1539 — 30° Hen: 8.

An Acte of Common Councell, concerning the Preseruation and clensing of the Riuer of Thames, made the eight and twentith day of September, in the thirtieth yeere of our Soueraigne Lord King *Henrie* the eight.

WHere by the Statute made in the seuen and twentith yeere of the Reigne of our Soueraigne Lord King Henrie the eight, among other for reformation of the misordering of the Riuer of Thames, by casting in Dung, or other filth, many great shelues and other risings haue beene of late growne and made within the same Riuer: By reason whereof, many great breaches haue ensued by occasion thereof: which of like shall be the occasion of the vtter destruction of the said Riuer, vnlesse that the same Law, be put in due execution, according to the true intent and meaning thereof.

Wherefore, for a further reformation of the same, and to the intent that the said good and wholsome Statute may be put in more execution, and better knowledge of the people: It is enacted by the authority of this Common Councell, that Proclamation may be made within this saide Citie, and the same to bee put in writing, and Tables thereof made and set vp in diuers places of this Citie, That it shall bee lawfull to euery person or persons, to digge, carry away, and take away Sand, Grauell, or any Rubbish, Earth, or any thing lying, or being in any shelue or shelues within the saide Riuer of Thames, without let or interruption of any person or persons, and without any thing paying for the same: and after that, to sell the same away, or otherwise occupie or dispose the said Grauell, Sand, or other thing, at their free liberty and pleasure. And that all Pauiers, Bricklayers, Tilers, Masons, and all other that shall occupie Sand, or Grauell, shall endeauour themselues, with all their diligence, to occupie the said Sand or Grauell, and none other, paying for the same reasonably, as they should and ought to pay for other Sand or Grauell, digged out of other mens grounds about the saide Citie, which after is filled againe with much filthy things, to the great infection of the Inhabitants of the saide Citie, and all other repayring to the same. And that further, humble suite may be made to the Kings Highnesse, That all persons hauing Lands or Tenements along the Riuer side, vpon certaine paine by his Highnesse, and the Lords of his most Honourable Councell, to be limited, shall well and sufficiently repayre and maintaine, all the Walles and Bankes adioyning to their said Lands, so that the water may not, nor shall breake in vpon the same. And the same to be continued, vntill the time the saide noble Riuer be brought againe to his old course and former estate. And that strong grates of Iron along the said water side, and also by the streete side, where any water-course is had into the saide Thames, bee made by the Inhabitants of euery Ward, so along the said Water, as of old time hath beene accustomed. And that euery grate be in height, foure and twenty inches at the least: or more, as the place shall neede: and in bredth one from another, one inch. And the same to be done with all expedition and speede. And if the Occupiers of the saide Lands and Tenements make default contrary to the ordinance aforesaide: or else if any person or persons, in great raines or other times, sweepe their soylage or filth of their houses into the Chanell and the same after is conueyed into the Thames, euery person so offending, shall forfeite for euery such default twenty pence: and that vpon complaint to be made to any Constable next adioyning to the saide place, where any such default shall be found, it shall be lawfull for the said Constable or his sufficient Deputie for the time being, from time to time to distraine for the same offence. And to retaine the same irreplegiable, and like law to be obserued, and kept, and like penalty to be paide for euery person, that burne rushes and straw in their houses, or wash in the common streets or Lanes, and to be recouered as aforesaid: and the one moity thereof to be to the Maior and Commonaltie: and the other moity to bee diuided betweene the said Constable that taketh paine, and the party finder of the saide fault. And if the Constable or his Deputie for the time being refuse to doe his dutie according to the true meaning of this Act, That then the Constable or his Deputie, which shall so refuse to do his dutie, as aforesaid, shall forfeit and pay for euery time offending, three shillings and foure pence. And the same penalty of the saide Constable to bee recouered and obtained by distresse irreplegiable, to be taken by any of the Officers of the Chamber of London, to the vse of the Mayor and Commonalty of London.

And further, that no person or persons, hauing any Wharfe or house by the said water side, make not their Laystals nigh to the riuer aforesaide, except onely the common Laystalles, where the common Rakers of this Citie vse to repose, and lay all their soylage, to be carried away by them with their Dung-boates. And that the saide Rakers shall lay their said dung, carried in their dung-boats to such conuenient place or places, as shall be appointed by the Lord Mayor of London for the time being, with the aduice of his brethren the Aldermen of the same, and to none other place or places, vpon paine to forfeit for euery such default, fiue pound to be recouered in any of the Kings Courts within the Citie of London, by Bill, Plaint, moytie of debt, or information by any person, that will or shall pursue for the same: the one moytie thereof to bee to the Mayor and Commonalty of London, and the other moytie to him or them that will or shall pursue for the same: in which actions or suites, no wager of Law nor Essoile shall be allowed.

God saue the King.

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